

The National
CITIZEN SURVEY™

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**Summary Report for
The City of Rye, NY**



Submitted by:

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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and The International City and County Management Association (ICMA).

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

Survey Administration

Following the mailing of a pre-survey notification postcard to a random sample of 1,200 households, surveys were mailed to the same residences approximately one week later. A reminder letter and a new survey were sent to the same households after two weeks. Of the mailed postcards, 25 were undeliverable due to vacant or “not found” addresses. Completed surveys were received from 575 residents, for a response rate of 49%. Typically, the response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” (or margin of error). The 95 percent confidence level for this survey of 575 residents is generally no greater than plus or minus 4 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample.

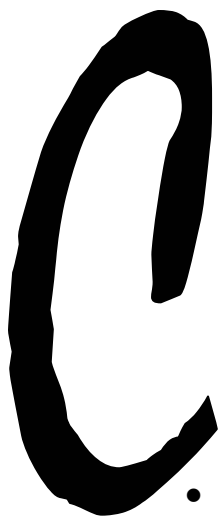
The results were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of all residents in the City of Rye. (For more information on the survey methodology, see Appendix II in the Report of Results. A copy of the survey materials can be found in Appendix III of the Report of Results.)

Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor” (EGFP). While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, we have found that ratings of almost every local government service in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents’ perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

Putting Evaluations Onto a 100-Point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 4 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus 4 points based on all respondents.



COMMUNITY LIFE

The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to the life of residents in the community. Survey participants were asked to rate their overall quality of life, as well as other aspects of quality of life in Rye. They also evaluated characteristics of the community, and gave their perceptions of safety in the City of Rye. The questionnaire assessed use of the amenities of the community and involvement by respondents in the civic and economic life of Rye.

- **QUALITY OF LIFE**

When asked to rate the overall quality of life in Rye, 43% of respondents thought it was “excellent.” No one rated overall quality of life as “poor.” Rye as a place to raise children received an average rating of 85 on a 100-point scale.

- **RATINGS OF COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS IN RYE**

The highest rated characteristics of Rye were overall appearance, recreational opportunities, and sense of community. When asked about potential problems in Rye, the three concerns rated by the highest proportion of respondents as a “major problem” were taxes, traffic congestion, and unsupervised youth. The rate of population growth in Rye was viewed as “too fast” by 60% of respondents, while 1% thought it was “too slow.” For access and mobility within Rye, ease of walking and rail/subway travel received the highest ratings.

- **PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY**

When evaluating safety in the community, 91% of respondents felt “somewhat” or “very safe” from violent crimes in Rye. In their neighborhood after dark, 90% of survey participants felt “somewhat” or “very safe.”

As assessed by the survey, 5% of households reported that at least one member had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 75% had reported it to police.

- **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Participation in the civic, social and economic life of Rye during the past year was assessed on the survey. Among those completing the questionnaire, 98% reported recycling used paper, cans or bottles from their home in the past year.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Several aspects of the government of the City of Rye were evaluated by residents completing The National Citizen Survey™. They were asked how much trust they placed in their local government, and what they felt about the services they receive from the City of Rye. Those who had any contact with a City of Rye employee in the past year gave their impressions of the most recent encounter.

- **PUBLIC TRUST**

When asked to evaluate whether they were pleased with the overall direction taken by the City of Rye, residents gave an average rating of 62 on a 100-point scale.

- **SERVICES PROVIDED BY RYE**

The overall quality of services provided by the City of Rye was rated as 71 on a 100-point scale.

- **THE CITY OF RYE EMPLOYEES**

Impressions of the City of Rye employees were assessed on the questionnaire. Those who had been in contact with a City of Rye employee in the past year (29%) rated their overall impression as 74 on a 100-point scale.